

AMENDMENTS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims in this application.

1. – 5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A method of handling an incoming call to a telecommunications device from a calling party to a called party, the method comprising:

receiving one or more parameters of a hold function, wherein the parameters include a user input predetermined time period during which the incoming call is placed on hold, and a list including at least one predetermined potential calling party from whom incoming calls are placed on hold, the user input predetermined time period during which the incoming call is placed on hold being obtained by interfacing with a scheduling program;

if the hold function is not enabled, directly ringing a called party device;

if the hold function is enabled, automatically answering the call if the call corresponds to the one or more parameters of the hold function and placing the call on hold, the automatically answering the call and placing the call on hold being performed without input from the called party at the time of the call;

playing a message to the calling party that the call has been placed on hold; and

connecting the called party to the calling party when the called party answers the call.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising determining whether the called party has enabled a hold function.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising determining whether the called party has pressed a button on the telecommunications device to enable a hold function.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising alerting the called party of the incoming call.

10. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising connecting the calling party to a voicemail system when the called party does not answer the call within a predetermined time period.

11. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein playing a message to the calling party includes playing a message that is resident on a services node of a telecommunications network.

12. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein playing a message to the calling party includes playing a pre-recorded message stored in a memory device resident on the telecommunications device.

13. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising connecting the call to a voicemail system when the called party presses a button on the telecommunications device.

14. (Currently Amended) A telecommunications system, comprising:
a home location register for storing a profile of a user of a telecommunications device, wherein the profile includes an indication of whether the user is a subscriber to an incoming call hold service implemented by the telecommunications system;

a services node for:

directly ringing a called party device if the hold function is not enabled;

determining whether an incoming call placed to the telecommunications device by a calling party should be placed on hold prior to the call being answered by the user of the telecommunications device according to the incoming call hold service if the hold function is enabled, the determining based

on a user input predetermined time period during which the incoming call is placed on hold, and a list including at least one predetermined potential calling party from whom incoming calls are placed on hold, the user input predetermined time period during which the incoming call is placed on hold being obtained by interfacing with a scheduling program;

placing the incoming call on hold prior to the call being answered,
the placing the call on hold being performed without input from the called party at the time of the call;

playing a message to the calling party that the call has been placed on hold; and

connecting the telecommunications device to the calling party if the user of the telecommunications device answers the incoming call; and

a mobile switching center for facilitating communication between the telecommunications device, the services node, and the home location register.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the services node includes an enunciator.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the enunciator is for playing a message to a calling party when a call is placed on hold.

17. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:
means for receiving one or more parameters of a hold function, wherein said parameters include a user input predetermined time period during which an incoming call is placed on hold, and a list including at least one predetermined potential calling party from whom incoming calls are placed on hold, the user input predetermined time period during which the incoming call is placed on hold being obtained by interfacing with a scheduling program;

means for directly ringing a called party device if the hold function is not enabled;

means for automatically answering a call placed by a calling party to a called party if the hold function is enabled and placing the call on hold, if the call corresponds to the one or more parameters and placing the call on hold, the automatically answering the call and placing the call on hold being performed without input from the called party at the time of the call;

means for playing a message to the calling party that the call has been placed on hold; and

means for connecting the called party to the calling party when the called party answers the call.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising means for determining whether the called party has enabled a hold function.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising means for determining whether the called party has pressed a button on a telecommunications device to enable a hold function.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising means for alerting the called party of the incoming call.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein:
the receiving one or more parameters of the hold function is performed via a web interface.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein:
the means for receiving one or more parameters of the hold function receives the one or more parameters via a web interface.